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# Get on Google's good side

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#### **BY LAUREN LABUNSKY**



While Google is not the only search engine that exists – and there are certainly other search engines that are important to optimize for and advertise on – there is no arguing that Google is the dominating force in the world of online search. 3.5 billion searches are made on Google every day<sup>1</sup>, plus Google holds over 85% of the desktop search engine market share<sup>2</sup> - clearly, it's important to get on Google's good side and stay there.

Google does not publicly list all the factors it takes into account when ranking content, but there are about 200 known Google ranking factors<sup>3</sup>. Knowing what the most important ranking factors are can go a long way in getting your dealership website on Google's good side for higher rankings.

One of the most important ranking factors, and one that will help you set a foundation for good standing with Google, is having a responsive website. This means that your site operates correctly and gives visitors a positive experience regardless of the device they are using to access it. A website that is difficult to use or navigate will negatively affect your ranking. This will cause time spent on your site to decrease and bounce rate to increase, further damaging your website ranking.

Another very important factor centers around the content on your site – both in regard to your expertise and authority on the content, as well as the quality of the content. Google needs to know that you a trustworthy resource to provide for online users searching for content like yours. You can earn Google's trust by publishing a large amount of high-quality content that is well-written and rich with keywords. The goal is to earn high engagement from website visitors – if they find plenty of content that matches what they were looking for and that meets their needs, they will spend more time on your site. This tells Google that it should continue ranking your site in a high position so that other search engine users can find you.

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Also crucial are backlinks, or links that direct online users to your site from other places on the Internet. These tell Google that other online sources trust your website enough to link back to you. While backlinks from other trustworthy sites help increase your ranking, there are some types of backlinks that can hurt you. Links from "bad neighborhoods" such as spam websites, as well as outdated links from sites that no longer exist or links from sites with low-quality content should be cleaned up and/or removed.

Google's goal is to provide online users with websites that provide a high-quality online experience, and that should be your top concern, too. With that common goal, getting on Google's good side isn't as challenging or intimidating as you might think. Keeping up to date on Google's latest news and updates can certainly help, as online trends and technology are constantly changing. It can also be helpful to work with search engine specialists or a marketing team partnered with Google to stay in the know and rest assured that your search engine rankings are being taken care of. It's not just important but *crucial* to get on Google's good side – luckily, these steps will also increase the value of your website for customers in the process.

Lauren Labunsky is the public relations manager at Dealer Spike, a leading web services provider for powersports dealerships. The award-winning digital advertising company is focused on helping dealers increase sales through powerful, distinctive website design and a full suite of online marketing tools to drive results. Dealer Spike's expertise comes from real-world dealership experience and a team of professionals who also ride. When you work with Dealer Spike, you're working with digital marketing experts who have a passion for your industry.

<sup>1</sup>Smart Insights

<sup>2</sup>Statista

<sup>3</sup>HubSpot

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